DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 404 901 HE 029 905

AUTHOR	Grayson, J. Paul
TITLE	Globe and Mail Reports, Student Experiences, and Negative Racial Encounters.
INSTITUTION	York Univ., Toronto (Ontario). Inst. for Social Research.
REPORT NO	ISBN-1-55014-260-7
PUB DATE	95
NOTE	37p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research/Technical (143)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Black Students; Business; *College Freshmen; Employment; *Focus Groups; Foreign Countries; Higher Education; *Minority Groups; *Newspapers; *Racial Attitudes; Racial Differences; *Racial Discrimination; White Students
IDENTIFIERS	Canada; Chinese Canadians; Italians; Portuguese People; Visible Minority (Canada); York University ON

ABSTRACT

This study examined the off-campus experiences of negative racial encounters among first-year students at York University in Ontario (Canada). Focus groups were conducted with 48 Black students, 26 students of Chinese origin, and 33 students of Italian or Portuguese origin in 1993-94. In descending order of frequency, students identified stores, jobs, schools, buses/trains, restaurants, encounters with police, everyday activities, offices, and media as sites in which they had negative racial encounters. In contrast to the frequency with which various sites were identified by students, articles dealing with "visible minorities" published by the Toronto (Ontario) "Globe and Mail" since 1977 focused overwhelmingly on sites in which the police were involved and, to a lesser extent, jobs. The focus group discussions indicated that students of all racial backgrounds may have negative racial encounters, that students of certain races/origins may have negative encounters in some sites while students of other races/origins may have similar experiences in other sites, that students felt that negative racial encounters were more prevalent off-campus than on-campus, and that some students talked about their negative experiences, particularly in stores and jobs, in a way that suggests an organization of experience in terms of systemic racism. (MDM)

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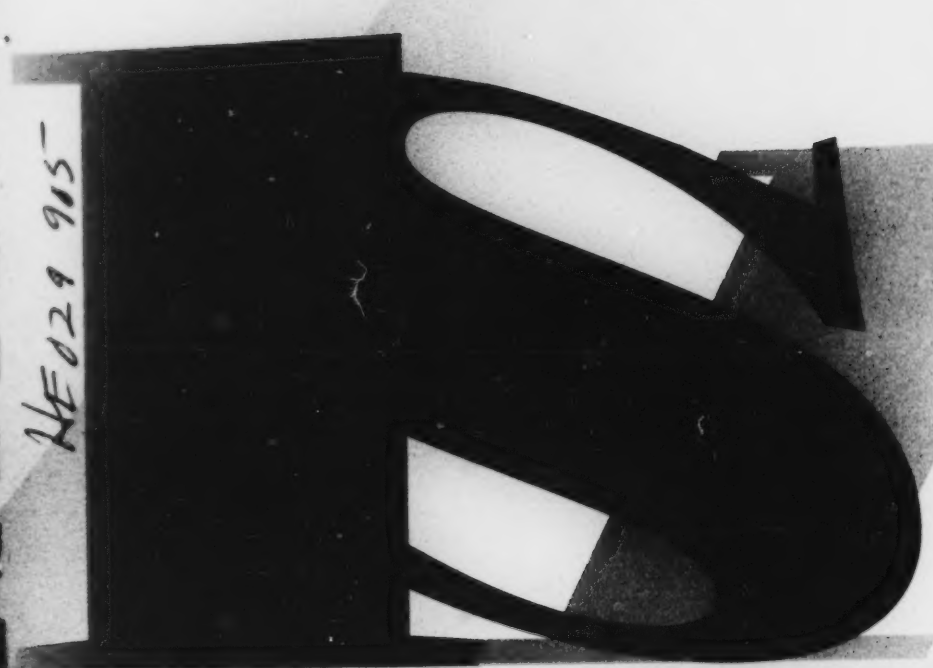
INSTITUTE FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH

GLOBE AND MAIL REPORTS, STUDENT EXPERIENCES AND NEGATIVE RACIAL ENCOUNTERS

J. PAUL GRAYSON



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Globe and Mail Reports, Student Experiences, and Negative Racial Encounters

J. Paul Grayson

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Published by: **Institute for Social Research**
York University

ISBN: 1 -155014 - 260 - 7

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The following is a report of interest to non-specialist readers.

Acknowledgements

A number of individuals at the ISR contributed to various phases of the research on which the following report is based. In no particular order I would like to thank: Darla Rhyne, Mike Ornstein, David Northrup, John Tibert, Greg Hanson, and Anne Oram. I would also like to thank Bill Bruce for his assistance with name generation and Linda Grayson and Thelma McCormack for helpful comments made on an early draft of the report.

Other Publications on York Students

Globe and Mail Reports, Student Experiences, and Negative Racial Encounters
J. Paul Grayson (1994) $10.00

Comparative First Year Experiences at York University: Science, Arts and Atkinson
J. Paul Grayson (1994) $10.00

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Student Withdrawals at York University: First and Second Year Students, 1984-85

Gordon Darroch, David A. Northrup and Mirka Ondrack (1989) $10.00

Summary

A series of focus group meetings were carried out with Black, Chinese origin, and Italian and Portuguese background students at York University to collect information on, among other things, off-campus experiences of negative racial encounters. In descending order of frequency, students identified:

- Stores;
- Jobs;
- Schools;
- Buses/Trains;
- Restaurants;
- Encounters with Police;
- Everyday Activities;
- Offices;
- Media;

as sites in which they had negative racial encounters. While I expected that jobs and encounters with police would be discussed, I was surprised that 38% of all negative encounters took place in stores and buses/trains.

In contrast to the frequency with which various sites were identified by students, articles dealing with 'visible minorities' published by the *Globe and Mail* since 1977 focused overwhelmingly on sites in which the police were involved, and, to a lesser extent, jobs. It is likely that the emphasis given by the media to certain issues contributed to my original expectations of sites of negative encounters that would be identified by students.

The student experience with negative racial encounters leads to a number of conclusions. First, students of all races/origins may have negative racial encounters. Second, Black students, those of Chinese background, and students of Italian and Portuguese background may all be victims in such encounters. Third, students of certain races/origins may have negative encounters in some sites; students of other races/origins may have similar experiences in other sites. Fourth, independent of race/origin, students feel that negative racial encounters are more prevalent off-campus than on-campus. Fifth, *some* students talk about their negative encounters, particularly in stores and jobs, in a way that suggests an organization of experience in terms of 'systemic racism'. In other situations negative encounters tend to be associated with individual characteristics and idiosyncracies.

Introduction

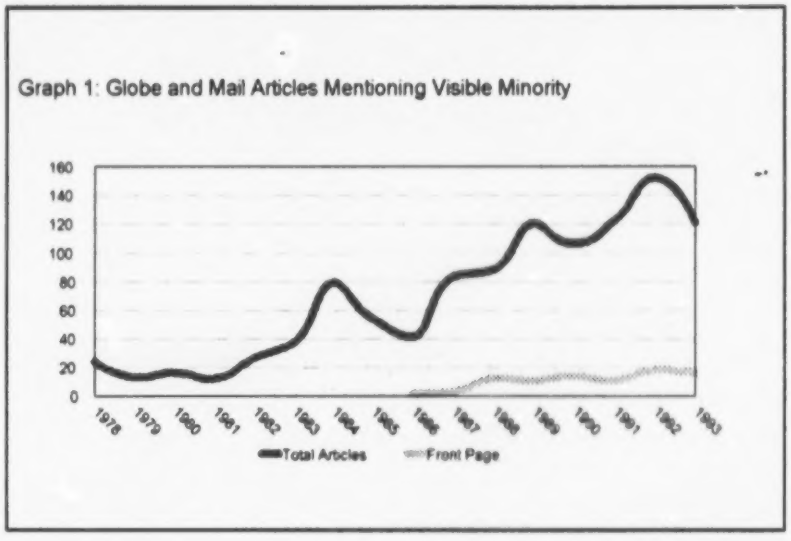
The original objective of this report was to describe and analyze the places outside York University in which first year students experience negative racial encounters; however, this objective changed somewhat as the result of the research findings themselves. At the beginning of the research, my unarticulated expectation was that particularly when non-White students described negative racial encounters they would focus primarily on issues like police harassment and discrimination in jobs. When describing their negative experiences, however, students very seldom talked about the police. While they did talk about jobs, they did so less frequently than I had anticipated. Conversely, I was surprised by the frequency with which negative contacts in unimagined places like stores and buses were mentioned. As a result, as a first step in the writing of the report, I was compelled to examine the potential origin of my unarticulated original assumptions.

At the end of the focus group meetings on which the current study is based, I did a computer search of *Globe and Mail* articles from November 30, 1977 to March 15, 1994 to determine if the usage of the term 'visible minority' had increased. As I toyed with the data, it became evident that my expectations regarding places in which students would experience negative racial encounters reflected the emphasis given by the *Globe and Mail* to various issues such as relations between the police and minority groups. While I am not crediting or blaming the *Globe and Mail* for my expectations, it is likely that my original assumptions were consistent with the overall emphasis that the media in Toronto give to various racial issues.

As a result, while the primary objective of the report remains the description and analysis of the places outside York University in which first year students have negative racial encounters, after sections on the conceptual orientation and focus of the study (*non-specialist readers can skip these two sections)*, the report compares the racial issues the *Globe and Mail* has emphasised over the past 17 years with the issues raised by students in focus group meetings. Other media in Toronto were not analyzed for the simple reason that their products are not archived in a fashion as readily accessible as the *Globe and Mail*. Had the primary concern of this report been with media representations of racial encounters, this restriction would have been serious. As the main focus is on student experiences, and as the emphasis given by the *Globe and Mail* to various issues is simply being used as one reference point to help put my original assumptions in perspective, dealing only with the *Globe and Mail* presents no problems. After some attention is given to areas covered by the *Globe and Mail* and topics raised by students, emphasis of the report will shift to an analysis of the results of the focus group meetings with first year students.

Conceptual Orientation

In Canada in general, and in Toronto in particular, there has been a recent and radical increase in the number of immigrants from areas of the globe with substantial non-white populations. For example, between 1981-91 the numbers of African and Middle Eastern immigrants to Canada increased by approximately 400%; Asian/Pacific immigrants by 300%; and Central/South American immigrants by 200%. Over the same period the number of immigrants from the United States and Europe remained relatively constant. As a result of recent immigration patterns it is estimated that in 1991 25% of the population of Metro Toronto was made up of 'visible minorities'. By 2001 the figure will be 45% (Samuel, 1992:34-35). Given immigration patterns such as these, it is little wonder that issues relating to 'visible minorities' have received increasing coverage in local media.



The extent to which articles that include reference to 'visible minorities' have been included in the *Globe and Mail* is outlined in Graph 1. As seen from the graph, the number of articles in which the expression was used grew from approximately 20 in 1978 to 120 in 1993. Increased coverage of issues pertinent to visible minorities has been paralleled by governmental concern with race, racism, and discrimination.

Racism can be viewed as the belief that behavioral, attitudinal, and other characteristics of individuals can be related to physiological (or racial) features such as skin colour, hair texture, facial characteristics, and height. *Discrimination* occurs when people are treated differently because of their physiological characteristics or race. Racist beliefs can exist independent of discriminatory practices. For example, some individuals in Canada may believe that members of specific racial groups are inferior; however, law prevents them from acting on the basis of such beliefs.

Systemic racism refers to outcomes of social institutional processes that consistently favour individuals with discernable physiological characteristics. Such outcomes may result from intentional institutional practices, such as prohibitions on the hiring of individuals with specified

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racial characteristics (e.g. as in South Africa prior to the 1993 election of Nelson Mandella), or unintentional practices that nonetheless have the consequences of excluding certain racial groups. As height sometimes varies by racial group, height restrictions on the employment of police officers is an example of the latter.

Social encounters in which individuals make either positive or negative evaluations based on race can be found in all societies. The ways in which such encounters are viewed and evaluated, however, varies. At one extreme we can think of a *totalitarian* approach in which it is assumed that racism, and, in most instances, discriminatory practices, characterize all social institutions and daily life. Within this perspective any individual of a non-dominant racial group who believes that he/she has not experienced racism is deluding him/herself. While such a viewpoint may have been appropriate in South Africa prior to the 1993 election, it also has been adopted by Philomena Essed (1990; 1991) in her analyses of the United States and the Netherlands.

A notion often associated with the totalitarian perspective is that because they lack power, subordinate groups cannot be racist (D'Souza, 1991). It is a fact, however, that members of subordinate groups may be racist; however, they may seldom be in institutional positions in which they can discriminate against others. If situations change, and once subordinate groups become dominant, they too may engage in discriminatory behaviour based on race. For example, when Idi Amin gained power in Uganda, individuals of East Indian descent were treated far worse than they had been under generations of British rule. Closer to home, Walkom (1994:215) has documented that the Ontario Employment Equity Commission suffered considerably from racism among Black, Indian, and aboriginal employees.

At the other extreme, the *utopian* view assumes racism is a feature of neither institutions nor everyday life. By definition, those who argue the contrary cannot be believed. Official spokespersons for various institutions and governments frequently articulate this perspective.

The *situational* approach occupies the middle ground. In this perspective racism, and/or discriminatory practices, may characterize certain institutions and specific everyday occurrences. As a result, individuals who say they have encountered racism and discrimination may be believed. Those who say that they have encountered neither racism nor discrimination may also be believed. As will be evident later, this middle position is most consistent with the findings of the current study. Whichever perspective is brought to bear on social encounters that may have racial overtones, in Canada, understanding is assisted by distinguishing among the *site* of the encounter, the *role relationships* involved in the encounter, and the actual *issue* on which the racially tinged encounter is based.

Sites are institutional or social settings - job, school, etc. - in which a certain range of behaviours are expected by individuals involved in an encounter. Independent of the site in which racially tinted encounters occur, they involve role relationships. While the boundaries of roles are under constant negotiation by individuals playing them, role relationships refer to the obligations

that participants in an encounter have to other encounter participants. For example, in an office site, it is legitimate for a boss to assume that his/her secretary will carry out certain job responsibilities. Conversely, within limits imposed by the institution and law, a secretary is required to meet the demands of his/her boss. In any site difficulties may arise because individuals bring to social encounters different expectations of role relationships. Such expectations may be related to the race or origin of other participants in the encounter.

The notion of 'issue' in a racial encounter is best explained by an example. Assume that the boss in the above situation is Black and the secretary is of Chinese origin. Suppose that the boss has the opportunity to promote a secretary in the office and the successful applicant is also Black. In this instance the issue is one of *promotion* and the secretary of Chinese origin may believe that her career mobility is affected by racial considerations.

In the following analysis, it will be evident that there is often a third party in a racial encounter: the witness. While such individuals may or may not be participants in the encounter, in a study such as this, they can provide reports and/or corroboration for claims of racism.

As in the examples provided here, individuals may interpret a number of situations in which they find themselves in keeping with pre-existing notions of the ways in, and degree to, which race affects the attitudes and behaviour of others. This is problematic for the researcher. While it is important to determine the ways in, and degree to, which individuals believe that they receive differential treatment because of their race, it is equally important to examine the intent of those seen as acting in a racist fashion. In the current study, while the importance of the latter is recognized, attention will only focus on the former. In essence, the objective is to identify and analyze the circumstances in which the York students involved in the study believe that they participated (usually as a victim) in a racial encounter. Where warranted, however, comments may be made regarding the possible intent of individuals involved in the encounter.

Study Focus

Using the analytical tools described above, the current study will focus on encounters with racial overtones experienced by first year York University students outside of the university setting and the degree to which encounters experienced by the students compare to issues involving race publicized by the *Globe and Mail*. It is not claimed that individuals involved in the study experience the full range of possible racially charged encounters. More importantly, no claims will be made regarding the pervasiveness of racially tainted encounters. Instead, the purpose of the study is to analyze the possible types of racial encounters students may have outside of the university. This type of inquiry contributes to an understanding of race and racism in general and to expectations and perspectives students may bring to the university in particular.

The current study builds on two previous studies of racial experiences of students at York University. In the first study (Grayson, 1994a), that involved a survey 1,129 first year students, it was determined that the first year was experienced differently by students of Black, East Indian, Chinese, European, and 'other' origins. (In 1993-94 these groups made up approximately 26% of the first year student body). Comparisons, however, did not always favour those of European background. For example, students of East Indian heritage reported the greatest number of out-of-class contacts with faculty, teaching assistants, and staff. By way of comparison, in terms of contacts with faculty, classroom experiences, and academic involvement, individuals of Chinese origin fared less well than other students. Moreover, while certain outcomes of the first year experience - self-assessment of intellectual development and increase in knowledge, first year grade point averages - varied by race, these differences could not be attributed to race per se. Instead, explanations were to be found in classroom experiences, contacts with faculty, etc. and academic involvement. Finally, when assessing their first year experience, the vast majority of students of all races indicated that visible minority students had been treated equally by other students, faculty and staff. Nonetheless, students of European background perceived more equality of treatment than those of Black, East Indian, Chinese, and, other origins. More concretely, while 91% of European students believed that visible minority students had been treated equally, this opinion was held by 86% of Blacks, 74% and 76% of students of East Indian and 'other' origins, and by only 64% of Chinese origin students.

In the second study (Grayson, 1994b), in order to identify the general nature of negative racial situations experienced by students that found expression in the survey, focus group meetings were held with Black students, students of Chinese origin, and individuals whose backgrounds were primarily Italian or Portuguese. (For the sake of convenience students will be referred to as Blacks, Chinese and Italian/Portuguese). Among Black students, two meetings were held with each of: those who could be identified as Canadian Blacks; Jamaicans; those from other countries in the Caribbean; and Africans. A total of 48 students were involved in the eight groups that were moderated by the same Black female. Three focus group meetings involving 26 students of Chinese origin were carried out by a female facilitator of Chinese background. Four meetings involving 33 students with Italian and Portuguese backgrounds were conducted by a White female facilitator. Students in the study came from the faculties of Arts and Pure and Applied Science and from Atkinson College, the evening operation of York University. (See Grayson 1994c and 1994d for more analysis of focus group materials.)

The findings of this second study were that the minority of students in the survey who felt that not all students were treated equally referred to classrooms, sports teams, staff offices, and everyday activities as sites of negative encounters. In addition, an examination of questionnaires collected at the end of the focus group meetings revealed that while only 27% of Black students claimed they had been treated worse than others within York, a far higher 48% felt that they had been treated worse than others outside of York. While only 27% of Black students believed that at York Chinese students were treated worse than others, a higher 39% stated that the latter were treated worse than others outside of York.

When Italian/Portuguese students commented on the same issues, only a small minority - 12% and 9% respectively - stated that because of their backgrounds they were treated worse than others outside and inside the university. By way of comparison, 42% of Italian/Portuguese students felt that the Chinese were treated worse than others outside the university. Only 5% believed that to be true of treatment accorded Chinese within York. In addition, while only 9% thought Blacks were treated worse than others inside York, 55% stated that outside of York Blacks were treated worse than others. In essence, students believed that non-white students were treated worse outside of York than inside the university. It must be stressed, however, that the absolute numbers completing post focus group meeting questionnaires were small and results should be treated with extreme caution. Indeed, the intent of the questionnaires was to shed light on focus group discussions and not to serve as independent sources of quantitative data.

In this report the analysis will focus on the additional information collected in the focus groups as it pertains to first year experiences with negative racial overtones *outside* York University. It is important to stress that data on this particularly sensitive topic was collected in as unobtrusive a fashion as possible. Students were not asked leading questions; instead, they were asked whether or not they had been treated differently outside York (either better or worse) because of their origins.

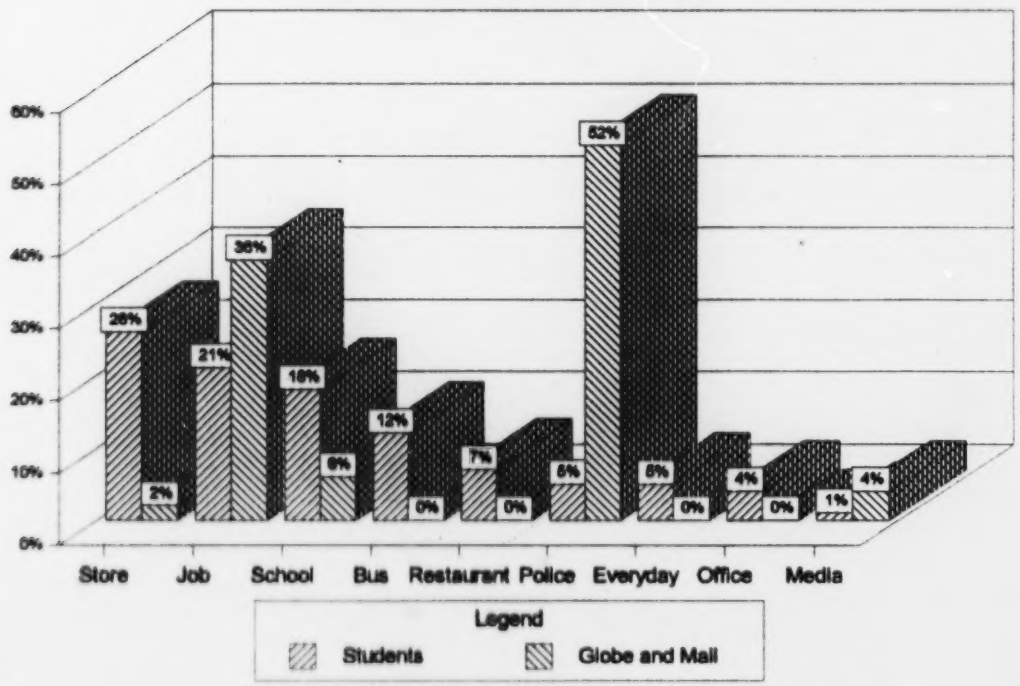
Negative Encounter Sites

The intent of this unobtrusive approach to data collection was to avoid defining the purpose of the focus group meetings as ones in which it was expected that students would have negative encounters to report. In this context it is important to note that students spent roughly three times as long discussing negative racial encounters outside of the university as within. Moreover, students raised approximately 99 different points relating to negative encounters outside of the university. The sites of these encounters are:

- Stores;
- Jobs;
- Schools;
- Buses/Trains;
- Restaurants;
- Encounters with Police;
- Everyday Activities;
- Offices;
- Media.

In Graph 2, the frequency with which students referred to the above sites is compared to the extent to which the same sites are focused on in *Globe and Mail* articles from 1977 to 1994.[1] Recall from the introduction that *Globe and Mail* articles are referenced for the reason that they shed light on the unarticulated expectations I had regarding the sites of racially tinged encounters that likely would be raised by students.

Graph 2: G & M and Student Focii



Sites in the graph have been arrayed in descending order of frequency based on students' perspectives. The most frequently mentioned site of negative encounters by students was stores. While stores were emphasized in approximately 26% of the comments of students, stores were the focus of only 2% of *Globe and Mail* articles. Jobs were the next most frequent site discussed by students. Whereas jobs were a focus in about 21% of students' comments, they were a concern in roughly 36% of *Globe and Mail* articles in which visible minorities were discussed.

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[1] Between November 30, 1977 and March 15, 1994, the *Globe and Mail* published 1,128 articles in which the term visible minority was used. Of these, 266 made specific reference to the sites that had been identified by students. The remainder dealt with matters that would not fit the definition of site as used in this report (e.g. general discussions of equity issues). As a result, the percentages in Graph 2 have a base of 266.

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The third site emphasized by students was schools (not universities, these were discussed in a separate report). Schools received approximately 18% of the overall emphasis placed by students on encounter sites. By way of comparison, only 6% of *Globe* articles dealt with schools. The fourth area of concern to students were buses and/or trains in which about 12% of negative encounters happened. None of the newspaper articles dealt with these sites. Seven percent of student emphasis focused on encounters in restaurants while the *Globe and Mail* had no articles dealing with this site.

The most important observation from Graph 2 relates to encounters with the police. While the police received only 5% of the total student emphasis, roughly 52% of *Globe* articles dealt with police. Even if due to the qualitative nature of student data we consider the possibility of a wide margin of error, it should be obvious that there is a radical difference between the emphasis placed on negative encounters with police by students and the attention paid by the *Globe and Mail* to the issue of police and visible minorities. Indeed, in retrospect, given the emphasis placed by the *Globe* on incidents involving the police, my surprise at finding such little emphasis given by students to the same area is understandable.

What have been termed 'everyday' sites (to be discussed more fully later) and offices receive roughly 5% and 4% respectively of student emphasis. No newspaper articles dealt with these sites. Finally, while the media received only 1% of student emphasis, roughly 4% of *Globe and Mail* articles focused on the media.

Before leaving this section it must be made clear that although percentages have been attached to the emphasis placed by students on various encounter sites, given the qualitative nature of the data under discussion, actual percentages should be treated with caution. It is safer to say, for example, that stores, jobs, and schools are the most frequently emphasized sites of negative racial encounters for students, or that encounters with police received little emphasis, than to deal with exact percentages. Similarly, it is safer to say that the vast majority of *Globe* articles mentioning visible minorities deal with the police and jobs than it is to quote exact percentages. In view of stated and unstated caveats such as these perhaps the most obvious observations and conclusions from the graph are:

- The main sites of negative racial encounters discussed by students were stores, jobs, and schools.
- The primary focus of *Globe and Mail* articles dealing with visible minorities involved the police; a secondary focus was jobs.
- From the foregoing it can be concluded that the sites of negative racial encounters experienced by students are somewhat different from the sites focused on by *Globe and Mail* reporters when covering minority related issues.
- While it cannot be assumed that the racial experiences of students necessarily are

similar to those of the rest of the population, the *Globe and Mail*, and other media, may leave a mistaken impression regarding sites in which the most frequent negative racial encounters occur.

Having putting my original unarticulated assumptions into perspective, it is now possible to discuss the various sites raised by students in detail.

Stores

Stores were a site in which particularly Black students identified encounters with negative racial overtones. By way of comparison, stores were mentioned less by Chinese students or individuals enrolled in Atkinson College where the average age is higher than in Arts or Science. This fact suggests that negative encounters in stores may be a function of both being Black and young.

The role relationships involved in store sites were primarily those of customer and sales clerk. Even though it might be assumed that in relationships such as these the advantage resides with the customer, in the cases cited, this was not the case. The specific issues identified by students as having negative racial overtones included being: ignored; followed or scrutinized; treated with suspicion, rudeness, and hostility; and dealt with dishonestly because of racial origins. Encounters described in these ways did not focus only on interactions between individuals of European origin and others.

Following/Scrutinizing

"They follow you like you're gonna steal something," one female Caribbean student complained of the treatment she usually is accorded in stores. A male Jamaican student used a colourful simile. "It's like bee and honey," he explained. "They just, like, swarm you. 'Can I help you?' Like, two or three at a time."

That perceptions such as these may be more than the results of over-active imaginations is confirmed by an African student who had a job as a security officer. "Sometimes we go to the shops," he explained, "and they go, 'watch out for, you know, these boys'. I used to hear about this business and I thought maybe this was just a few isolated incidents." Apparently, his job as a security officer resulted in a different conclusion.

Ignoring

While some students complained of excess vigilance, others commented on the fact that they were frequently ignored when they shopped. "I find no one comes up to help unless I'm

going to the cash register with something in my hand and then all of a sudden everyone wants to help," a female Jamaican student complained. As far as she was concerned, the change in attitude on the part of staff resulted from the belief that "they're going to get a commission from it."

A female Caribbean student explained that, "My boyfriend's White. Whenever we go, like, shopping, they'd [store staff] walk right by me. I'm looking at the watches," she stated in disbelief, "and they walk right by me, and they'd come up to my boyfriend and they'd say, 'can I help you sir?'"

SUSPICION

Other students complained of the general air of suspicion that characterized their experiences in stores. A male Jamaican student noted that, "you go into a store to buy something on your credit card [and] its like they're all tense and they're looking at you." The result, he concluded, is that "it makes you feel uncomfortable."

A second male Jamaican student had another example. "Whenever I go to a bank with American money," he told the group, "they stand there for five minutes looking up at the light. I don't know what they're looking for, but they're looking up in the light to see, and these are ten dollar bills. It's not, like, hundred dollar bills."

HOSTILITY RUDENESS

Some interactions of students in stores were characterized by overt hostility and rudeness. By way of illustration, a male African student told the following story:

> I went as a part-time security [guard] during the summer time in Chinatown. I had a walkman that have a battery you just can't buy at any shop. I walked with my bag at my back just getting ready for my shift and I walk into a mall in Chinatown. I walked into one of the stores and I goes, 'do you have this battery around here?'. Yeah, and I see he has one behind the counter. 'No, no, no, you can't see it,' he says. 'How much is it?' 'Oh, its very expensive, he says.'
>
> You know what I did? I went to a dressing room, put on my security jacket, strapped on my watch, strapped on my radio, and I walked to the shop again. 'Do you have a battery?' He goes, 'oh yes, you work here?'

A second African student reported a negative encounter in a shop in Chinatown. "One time I went there," he explained, "you go to the shop and you want to ask something. This lady asks me, 'WHAT DO YOU WANT?' I was so embarrassed," the student confessed. "I mean, everybody was there and you ask me, 'WHAT DO YOU WANT?' In anger the student responded to

the woman, "I've come to steal. I mean, I was so mad. I don't think you ask a customer, 'WHAT DO YOU WANT?'"

Yet a third example was provided by an adult Chinese student who prefaced her remarks with the general comment that, "I would honestly say I don't feel discriminated because of my sex, or my colour or anything." Nonetheless, there was one incident that stuck in this student's mind. "I was in Canada 14 years," she started. "I went into a small shop in Stouffville. All I ask is where I can find some eggs. The woman told me," the student continued, "I don't speak Chinese. That's what she told me," she emphasized, in disbelief. "I was asking in English!" The student handled the situation by explaining to the clerk, "I don't come in to discuss language with you. I'm coming in to get some eggs and if you can't help me, you shouldn't be minding store here. Then she told me where the eggs were."

"If I walk away," the student emphasized, "that would just reinforce her attitude, so I just told her." The student completed her comments on this incident by stressing that, "you can't really generalize by saying that those people are bad to us. She's just ignorant."

CHEATING

Some students identified occasions on which they felt they were nearly, or actually were, cheated because of their race or origins. A female Chinese student confessed that her, and her older sister's English, "is not as good as people born in Canada." As a result, once when her sister phoned a company to make a purchase, "the girl is just giving us crazy price. Then we ask her to give us the calculation. 'How, how do you get this price?'" the student's sister asked. "The girl," she follows-up, "is not answering our questions and says that's the computer calculated and her attitude is pretty rude. My sister," the student concludes, "was very angry at that time."

While it does not exactly fall under the heading of cheating, a possibility described by a student of Filipino origin [recruited to the focus group by mistake because of his Italian sounding name] states his belief that store clerks/owners are more likely to give different prices to members of their own group than to others. "Filipinos are just, like, the same," he argues. "If I am buying something and if he happens to be Filipino, they kind of give you a bargain sometimes. If I were to go to a store, an Italian store, I would not get a discount."

THE WITNESS ROLE

While the vast majority of students involved in the study did not experience differential treatment related to their race or origin in stores some nonetheless witnessed situations in which others were treated in certain ways because of race or origin. As one male Chinese student observed, "Most people don't like Black as much as a White guy. When a White guy go to store buy something and dress poorly and a Black guy dress up like a normal, normal person," the

student felt that the "the White guy will be treated better than the Black guy."

On another occasion a female Caribbean student remarked that, "I can't ever remember anything happening to me, but I've seen it happen to other people, like Chinese who own grocery stores, or little convenience stores, or even Indian people. I've seen it happen."

Conclusion

The role relationship customer-clerk in a store site is one in which it can usually be assumed that, because of his or her purchasing power, the customer is accorded respect. Situations such as the foregoing, however, leave no doubt that students may encounter situations in stores in which they feel that they are treated negatively because of their race or origin.

What cannot be answered by the foregoing is the *extent* of such incidents. Moreover, while there is no doubt that students were, and are, affected by such encounters, it is difficult to determine the degree to which incidents perceived to be negative are examples of racism or cultural misunderstanding. Likely the situations described contain examples of each.

It is equally clear that in store sites negative encounters are not restricted to those between Whites and non-Whites. More specifically, examples were given of racially tainted encounters between students who were Black and individuals of Chinese origin.

Places of Employment

In Graph 2 it was shown that places of employment (jobs) were the second most frequently mentioned sites of negative racial encounters. Unlike with stores, where young adult students from the faculties of Arts and Pure and Applied Science reported the greatest number of bad experiences, examples of negative encounters in places of employment were volunteered by students from all faculties/colleges. As a result, it is a safe bet that job sites may provide the possibility of negative racial encounters independent of age. In raising this possibility, however, it must be re-emphasised that this study cannot be used as an indication of wide-spread racism in places of employment; instead, it can provide insight into what students might have in mind when they make reference to negative racial encounters in work places.

Applicant-Employer

Some negative encounters at places of work involved the general applicant-employer relationship in which the racial or ethnic origin of the applicant was seen to be an issue. To quote one Black Canadian Atkinson student with reference to a hiring agency that she was connected to,

"I have had jobs or I have applied for [jobs], and when you go back to the agency, the agency tells you what they [the employer] said, which is, 'we have enough of those people around here,' and so on."

The comment of this Black woman aside, students of European origin were more likely to focus on bias in the application process. As one White male complained with regard to 'employment equity' measures, "I feel sometimes I am being discriminated against because I am a White male. I don't stand a chance out there." Another male of European origin observed, "In my work, I'm the only male in my department, in my area, who is White." Another student conceded that particularly White males were suffering disadvantages but believed that, "in the next five years, or by the turn of the century, this handicap the White male or White female has right now is going to be all gone and everybody will again be on equal par. They are," she complained, "trying to correct maybe a hundred years of injustice in ten years." Consistent with this theme, a female student of European ancestry felt that while in general, "the average White male probably hasn't [been discriminated against but] if you want to be a fire fighter you probably have."

Employee-Boss

A type of incident referred to a couple of times involved role relationships between employees and their bosses and focused on the issue of promotion. In each case, individuals believed that their racial origins stood in their way of advancement. "It's there," a male Jamaican Atkinson student explained. "I said to my boss one day, 'what do I have to do [to be promoted]?' I said it straight up to her face." In reply, "she said, 'I can't believe you are saying that. You are saying I'm a racist.'"

On another occasion a female Chinese student observed with regard to promotion that, "I find out in a workplace, it's a bit different. The Chinese people," she explained, "even when they get the progress, promote into a high position, but still they have a limit." As far as this woman was concerned, "their ability is not enough. It's simple there's a limit for them. Their communication skills is good, they handle stuff ok, but there's just a limit there."

Employee-Co-Workers

Several students identified relationships with their co-workers, or commented on their co-workers in a particular way, that suggested negative experiences based on race. For example, when speaking of Blacks, a female student of Chinese origin confessed that, "I think they are really badly treated. But, unfortunately," she continues, "I tend not to, you know, praise the Lord of sympathy on them because, well, the Black people that I've met, I tend to stay away from them and my workplace." She explains, "two out of three of sub-standard staff are Blacks and they, they really not hard working enough, and, you know, they performance is not that good." She

concludes by saying, "I think the reason why they are badly treated is what they perform or what they do before the people."

On another occasion a female of Chinese origin described her own problems when attempting to communicate with individuals she worked with. "When I talked to them," she explained, "they just frowned and they didn't understand what I said and I really didn't understand what they said at that time." She backs-up somewhat by qualifying that, "they don't really say something that will offend you, but the gesture's there, you know. The way they talk to you, that really upset me I think." Although her comments may be viewed as imprecise, the student concludes, "I would consider that as a kind of discrimination."

Employee-Customer/Client

On more than one occasion students referred to their dealings as employees with customers or clients as relationships involving incidents with racial overtones. By way of illustration, a female student from the Caribbean described an incident in which it was clear to her that a customer was desperate to avoid bodily contact. "I worked in a cafe," the student explained, "and I'm always there by myself. This older lady came in and she bought coffee and I put my hand out to take the money. Instead," the student continued with her narrative, "she put it on the counter. That's no problem with me, I picked it up and I was about to give her change and she goes, 'no, no, no... put it on the counter!', and she was yelling at me and I was, like, 'okay, take your damn things and get the hell out!'"

A male African student who worked in a bank revealed incidents that focused on his competence rather than on bodily contact as in the above case. "I am a customer representative in a bank," he told his group. "There are people," he said with an air of disbelief, "who have come and asked me how I got the job." What is most galling is that, "they even imply that I'm not qualified or the job is not for me."

Conclusion

Places of work are potential sites of negative encounters based on race. The negative experiences described by students involved relationships between job applicants and employers, employees and bosses, co-workers, and employees and customers/clients. As was the case when stores were under discussion, it is clear that negative encounters in places of work potentially involve a number of racial groups.

Schools

The third most common site in which students reported that they had negative racial encounters was schools. Role relationships in which racial issues arose included those with other students and student-teacher relationships. The issues themselves ranged from perceived slights to racial vandalism.

Student-Student Relationships

In one focus group meeting a female student of Italian origin recounted an incident in which a seemingly innocuous event at a high school track meet could have developed into a racial incident of considerable magnitude.

> I was at a track and field meet and I was on the bus and ready to leave. I won a silver medal by the way. I was on the bus and quite happy, and this Black girl knocked on the window, and she was a very large girl, and I looked at her and I said: 'we are sharing this bus with another school,' and they were all Black. She didn't seem to know anyone from our side, so I ask if she wanted someone from there. And she said she wanted to speak to me. She was really tough!
>
> I looked at her and asked her, 'what did I do?' She says, 'you have been giving Elizabeth a dirty look.' I asked, 'who is Elizabeth?' She said, 'don't jive with me girl.' And she looked really pissed off. Honest to God, I did not know what she was talking about. I was minding my own business the whole day. She just bad mouthed me, and she walked away from the bus. She threatened my life!
>
> I sat there for a while and I was scared, my heart was beating. So I thought, 'wait a minute, screw her!' I got up and stormed up the bus, and she was with her friends, and they were acting, like, cool. I walked right up to them and told them off. 'If you have something to say, say it to my face.' This little girl walks out and said, 'I'm Elizabeth.' I thought, 'give me a break!' I didn't even see you, and we worked it out and it was ok.
>
> I think it was because I was White and there were a lot of Black guys there asking me questions about my medal, like it looked like 'raw' hanging out and stuff. I think she got upset. And she took it out on me because I was White.

Another school based incident involving fellow students was recounted by a female of Caribbean origin. "At my high school in Ajax," she told her group, "there was an incident where a few White kids took red paint and splashed it on the bulletin board and put 'Nig's blood' on it. Writing on lockers beside mine, 'Nigger go back to Africa.'" In response to this incident the Board of Education took considerable action. "They put African history in [our] curriculum. They had more activities for minorities. They had more meetings with teachers, parents."

STUDENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships involving students and teachers can be divided further into those in which racial origin conferred either positive or negative advantage. Overall, it appears as though, on some occasions, being of Chinese origin is seen to confer advantage. As an example, a male Jamaican student remarked of teachers that "with a Chinese person [they] expect them to be so brilliant." A student of Chinese origin in another group would have agreed with this assessment. "I get encouragements from my teachers," he remarked. The reason for differential treatment, he felt, was his racial origin. Another student with Chinese background confirmed that, "I feel, like, I get more encouragements from my friends and my teachers. Like, we're probably doing the same amount of work but I'll get a higher mark just because I not a Caucasian. I'm not like the people sitting around me." In explanation for differential treatment accorded students with Chinese backgrounds a Chinese male hypothesized that, "I guess they never expected a new student just step into Canada would do the same workload as people who are born in here and I guess they were surprised."

In a somewhat unique case a male Jamaican student had mixed feelings regarding preferential treatment he had been accorded because of his race. "When I went to Humber College," the student explained, "like, the teacher, when a White person came to him for, um, extension, he wouldn't do an extension." By way of comparison, "he'd expect less from me so he'd give me an extension anyway."

Encounters between students and teachers that can be described as negative usually involved what were viewed as low expectations because of students' origins. It should be noted that it was the expectation itself and not any resulting behaviour that students sometimes found offensive. For example, a female student of Chinese background recalled that, "in the fifth grade, I wrote a story, it wasn't a good story, but it was in the fifth grade and I got a nine out of ten." The student remembered that "before she [the teacher] gave me back the story, she bluntly asked me if I wrote it myself or I got help, and I couldn't understand why. Like I wrote it myself but that hurt." Later, in junior high school, the same student remembered that "I'd get, like, 100% on spelling tests and they'd be surprised that I'd get a 100% and once in junior high, English class, I got 90% and he [the teacher] came out and said, 'well, I don't usually give 90s, but here you have a 90%.' Like, he didn't give it to me," the student explained, "I earned it." She concluded by saying, "teachers have treated me quite bad."

Negative expectations of perhaps more lasting significance were recalled by a Canadian Black student completing her education at Atkinson College. "I had some experiences in high school and so on," she started. Most importantly, "the guidance counsellor [told] my mother to put me in the business courses so I would learn to type, go out and be a secretary and so on, and my mother did because she did not know any different." The student believed that had she not been Black, advice, that limited her occupational chances, would not have been given.

Conclusion

Negative racial encounters in schools occurred between students and between students and teachers. With respect to the latter, students recounted incidents in which particularly Chinese students had benefited from positive expectations of teachers. By way of comparison, both Chinese and Black students told of teachers with negative expectations based on the racial background of the student.

On the Buses and Trains

I was surprised by that fact that, as seen in Graph 2, 12% of all comments involving negative encounters involved public transportation and particularly bus ridership. Upon reflection, however, this is understandable. On public transportation individuals are in competition with one another for seats and, quite frequently, because of the press of passengers, have unwanted bodily contact. Indeed, public transportation may be the site in which individuals have the least control over the maintenance of acceptable distance between themselves and others. That such contacts might take on a racial dimension seems inevitable; however, as will be seen, issues of a racial nature that arise in public transportation are not restricted to those of unwanted bodily contact. Sometimes the bus or train simply provides a location for the emergence of pre-existing hostilities. Whatever the case, the primary role relationship involved in negative encounters on public transport is that of passenger-passenger. Far less frequently, the passenger-driver relationship is mentioned.

Passenger-Driver

The experiences of a female Canadian Black exemplify potential passenger-driver problems. She starts by commenting that, "The only experiences that I've had with racial tension has been, like, catching the bus. TTC drivers," she continues, "it's like I've noticed, especially how they have a different treatment when you're Black or Indian as compared to when you're a non-visible minority." She illustrates her point by noting that "they [TTC drivers] are more scrutinies [sic] of Black persons coming on with a Metropass or paying a fare as compared to, like, a group of young White kids that you know are scalping, but it's like they just brush it off."

Passenger-Passenger

In passenger-passenger relationships, several examples can be given of situations in which the issue of bodily contact between passengers took on racial overtones. To quote a female student from the Caribbean at length on the matter:

I went to school in Guelph and there's not many Black people in Guelph. I started taking the bus to school. This one girl, I don't know, she had a problem with me sitting beside her and I knew just soon as I sat down she did, 'Aieee!!!'. She went, like, right into the window, so I said, 'ok, I'll fix her'! Every time the bus made a turn I would squeeze against her, you know, and she had a problem with that. So I continued to squeeze against her. That's the only time I experienced anything personally.

Another example is given of problems arising from potential bodily contact by a male student from an African country. "You sit on the bus," he observed, "and people won't sit with you until the bus is full, or until anywhere is full, or the White person sitting by himself is full." In this case it might be noted, however, that White North Americans are unlikely to sit beside strangers independent of their race or origin.

This possibility was recognized by a male student from Uganda. "If he does not hurt me, and someone sits away from because he is simply not used to me, it doesn't really bother me," he stated. The student explains that "because of the experiences I have had in my country, the discrimination people get, and if you see that and you come here, I think I am in a position not to mind about such trivial things."

A negative encounter on the subway involving Chinese and Black youth did not involve the issue of bodily contact but resulted from pre-existing antagonisms that found expression in a relatively confined space. In this instance, racial violence could easily have been the outcome of the encounter. As a result, it is worthwhile quoting the Chinese student's description of the incident extensively.

I was with my friend in a TTC, the better way. This is late at night, at 11. We just finished a movie, and so we go home, we living in Scarborough. I remember about three or four years ago, there is a group of Blacks. We speak in Chinese, so my friend yelled at them, 'you stupid Black!', or something like that. In Chinese, 'you stupid Blacks! You guys should go back to speak your barbarian language!' So those Blacks, because, you know, something wrong, right? So we were sitting in one end so they moved to the other end to our side.

So we see a confrontation start. From Spadina to Yonge, I don't remember which station. A Chinese guy comes in, I mean from outside, just comes in. So the Blacks, what they have done is go to the Chinese guy. They tried to touch his head, touch that Chinese guy head and, you know, just make his hair to be a mess.

We just can't stand it. Ok, I think simply this is a discrimination, so what we have done is I hold my friend. My friend wants to fight, ok. So I hold my friend and said, 'if you want to fight, not now.' I mean, we just three guys and I don't think that Chinese guy is going to fight, ok. So what we have done is when they go out, we kicked their butts, because they're getting off the subway at Yonge. We just kick their butts and they asked us to

fight. I said forget it you stupid something and that's the story. So even within the ethnic group we still have some discrimination, not only from White.

The irony in this case is that the youths of Chinese origin believed that they had been 'discriminated' against by the Blacks, even though they were not sensitive to the fact that by insulting the Blacks in Chinese, they had behaved in a derogatory fashion themselves.

A second example of a racially charged encounter between passengers that did not involve bodily contact but resulted in a good degree of embarrassment is provided by a female student of Italian origin. The student points out that "I was coming home from school and *I didn't even see this lady get on the bus*." The woman, described not unkindly as "an old black lady," said to her friend, "Look at this White girl. Won't even move to let me sit down." The student wondered, "Why did she have to say White girl?" After, "I felt like an idiot and said, 'would you like to sit here?' I didn't say 'would you like to sit here *Black lady*.' Do you know what I mean?" the student asked. "I felt like she made me feel really stupid. I'm sure she wouldn't have said that if I was Black. She wouldn't have said," the student theorized, "'well look this Black girl won't move." The problem for the student was that she "felt like [she] was being really rude, first of all for not offering her [the Black lady] a seat, and secondly for being late [for school]." Worse still, when the seat was offered, the Black lady said, "'no, I don't want to sit in your seat!' Oh God!," the student recalled, "like, I was really offended. I felt really stupid and everyone was looking at me."

Conclusion

Public transit, and particularly buses, provide sites in which negative encounters may arise between passengers and drivers, but more likely, between or among passengers. On many occasions difficulties arise because individuals of different races and/or origins are thrown into bodily contact with one another. In other situations the public transit or buses simply provide a confined space in which existing animosities spring to the fore.

Restaurants

Negative encounters in restaurants may occur between restaurant patrons and restaurant staff (maitre'd, waiter) or between/among patrons. Of the possibilities, the former were most frequently discussed in the focus groups. Individuals of Chinese origin were most likely to identify restaurants as sites in which negative encounters occurred.

PATRON-PATRON

Only one example was given of a situation in which encounters between or among restaurant patrons were problematic. In this instance a female student whose background was Italian commented of unspecified 'others' that, "they feel if they go into a cafe and there is all Chinese people, 'what the hell are they doing there taking all our spots?'" Comments like this indicate that as on public transit competition for spaces may precipitate negative incidents.

Patron-Staff

The incidents discussed in focus groups that concentrated on the patron-staff relationship were all raised by students of Chinese origin; moreover, the encounters discussed occurred in Chinese restaurants. The incidents students chose to discuss are reflective of divisions among Canadians of Chinese origin.

For example, a male Chinese student made the following observation of Chinese restaurants. "You make a reservation for restaurant and when you go over there and you've been there waiting for half an hours, but you just keep seeing people comes in, comes in, comes in." Those who are seated, "they are White or European types." On another occasion a man complained that, "when you go, like, at a restaurant or something, if you don't speak Mandarin or whatever they speak there - I don't speak it - they treat you different, even though you're Chinese."

The general theme of the foregoing is also evident in the story of a Chinese woman who went with her mother for a restaurant meal. She starts by observing that "a Chinese person to be in a Chinese restaurant and can't speak Cantonese or something, they will be treated worst than the Canadian. I find," she goes on, "they [Canadians] get more help on, like, ordering." By way of example, "me and my mom, like we went to Chinatown once and we don't speak Cantonese you know. They think because you can't speak Cantonese you don't have money to pay for the stuff. My mom would order this bowl of soup that would cost $56.00 or something." The reaction of the staff was, "do you know how much it cost?". The importance of this question was that it "really put us down."

CONCLUSION

Restaurants were identified sites in which negative encounters between patrons and other patrons, and between patrons and restaurant staff were possible. Of these possibilities, students concentrated more on the latter than the former. In addition, Chinese origin students were more likely than other groups to focus on incidents in restaurants. Most often, such incidents involved Chinese people being treated negatively by other individuals of Chinese origin.

The Police

Other sections have focused on sites in which negative encounters of a racial nature occur. In discussing the police, however, encounters can occur in a number of sites. As a result, it is more appropriate to organize discussion in terms of negative and positive encounters with police. The relationship that characterizes interactions with police can be defined as those of citizen and potential enforcer of the law. The witness role is also important in a discussion of the police.

Negative Encounters

In view of the political climate in Toronto I had expected that negative encounters with police would be a frequently, and hotly, discussed topic, particularly by Black students. As a result, I was somewhat surprised to find that relatively little attention was paid to the police; moreover, many comments on the police appeared to reflect hearsay rather than direct experience. Indeed, there was only one student who spoke negatively of the police from personal experience.

An African male student told the members of his group that, "I was driving at eight o'clock in the morning on Davenport and Dufferin and a policeman stopped me." The student claimed, "I was going about forty to fifty kilometres an hour, and sixty was the limit." As requested, the student showed the officer his licence. "When did you get this licence?" the officer demanded. The student replied that "I had this for about six years, and I was never convicted." The officer's reply was, "You are lying, you have been doing eighty kilometres an hour. I am not lying," the student replied, " I am a Moslem, and he [the officer] said, 'I am a Christian too.' The student ended up with a $120 ticket and claimed that, "I was so surprised I was shocked. I went to court and thanks to God he [the officer] did not show up." Perhaps more important than this specific incident was the student's belief that, "If you are driving around in Toronto the police will spot you, that you are a Black person. I have a nice fancy car." The student left no doubt that because he was Black and drove a nice car he could expect what he regarded as discriminatory treatment at the hands of the police.

Positive Encounters

"I think it depends on the officer he meets," another male African student said in reply to the incident described above. He explained that, "my license had expired for a year. I was still driving and the cop happened to catch me. I just got out [of the car] and said I was sorry. He was a young guy," the student continued. "He told me not to drive. He was nice. So I didn't get a ticket."

In contrast to the other student who felt that his being Black was held against him, the student under discussion here thought the contrary. "He lets you go," he surmised, "because he

thinks you don't know, you are a minority perhaps, you have just come into the country."

The Witness Role

Assuming this time the role of witness, the same student argued that, "There is a tendency for us to get in trouble with the law more than maybe the people have been here. Don't blame the policeman for that attitude," he cautions. "We get in trouble much more than people who have been here for longer time, and too who know the rules." Echoing similar sentiments a student of Jamaican origin expressed the opinion that, "What I don't like is we could have a guy, he might go and steal something, and then gets busted by the cops, and then will start complaining."

Others, whose opinions were based on hearsay rather than experience, were less charitable toward the police. For example, a man of Portuguese origin stated, "I think they [Blacks] are treated by police, especially the young ones, very badly, but," he cautioned, "I think young people in general are picked a lot more by police now." Expressing similar views, a female student of Italian origin explained that, "I attended a workshop on Blacks and Black youth in the justice system, and there were thirty young Black people in there. Almost all of them," she noted, "had their home raided by police, almost all of them had been stopped by police for no reason and searched." Finally, a male student of Italian origin concluded, "when it comes to law enforcement, there seems to be a double standard of justice, especially in the US, in urban America."

Conclusion

Contrary to expectations, few students mentioned dealings with police in the focus group meetings. When the police were mentioned, overall, it was in a more favourable light than had been expected. In addition, few students had direct experiences with police on which they could base their opinions.

Everyday Encounters

There were a number of encounters described in the focus groups that cannot easily be associated with, or restricted to, specific sites or role relationships. As a result, these have been called 'everyday encounters'. Students of Chinese origin more than students with other backgrounds made reference to such events.

Chinese Origin Students

Chinese origin students' descriptions that have been placed in this category frequently embody general feelings regarding social encounters and the extent to which they are racially tinged. By way of example, when discussing unequal treatment at the hands of others, one male student reflected that, "sometimes just the way they talk, the way they smile, laugh. It's subtle discrimination." The theme involving voice was picked up by other students in different groups. "Maybe they talk different, like the tone of the voice is different or something," a male student proposed. "Then, maybe they are slightly rude or something."

On other occasions students made more specific reference to experiences that can be placed in the 'everyday' category. When asked if he had ever been treated differently because of his origins, a male student replied that, "I think I have met some people, actually twice I remember, offensive." The student recalled that, "they specifically mentioned Chinese, nasty words towards Chinese specifically, but," the student cautioned, "I don't think they especially told at me and they were not in an authority position." As a result, "I didn't lose anything because of that. They were just offensive toward Chinese."

More specific still is a negative street encounter described by a male Chinese student. "One time," he explains, "I drive downtown. I think he's Indian or Canadian. I'm not sure." Whatever the case, "he just look at my car and say, 'Japanese car, go away, don't stay here. Why didn't you buy an American car?'" While this incident, on the face of it, could be viewed as a concern with buying North American rather than Japanese cars, the student perceived it as a racial affront.

Blacks and Whites

No Black students mentioned encounters that can be placed in the 'everyday' category; however, a number of students noted incidents that in one way or the other involved Blacks. For example, a female Italian student remarked that "if you are White youth hanging out with a Black youth, it is almost like guilt by association." Along the same lines a female Portuguese student recalled that "I did some volunteer work with kids in a predominantly Black high school. They told me if they were downtown or something, they would always get stopped [presumably by the police] and asked [likely for identification]. They are," she concluded, "just looking like the American gang member now coming into Canada and it is causing a lot of fear."

On one occasion a female of Portuguese origin described an everyday encounter in which she was the victim of racially motivated bad behaviour. "Once I was trying to reverse a car in a parking lot and there was a group of young men who happened to be Black standing behind my car." Although they presumably would have noticed that the woman wanted to move, they just stood there, "for five to ten minutes, and finally I had to ask them to move so I could reverse."

The woman recalls that, "they hurled all kinds of insults at me, based on my colour, and saying, 'you White bitch,' whatever." The student was careful to point out that "that is the only bad experience I have had as a White person."

CONCLUSION

Some negative racial encounters cannot be easily associated with, or confined to, specific role relationships. Statements made by students that can be placed in this category include non-specific experiences with negative racial overtones as well as specific events that occur in non-institutionalized sites such as the street. Most frequently, experiences of this nature were noted by students of Chinese origin. By way of comparison, Black students were not likely to mention encounters that fell into the interstitial 'everyday' category; however, some White students recalled that they had heard of Blacks encountering everyday hassles and one woman of Portuguese origin had been the victim of racial harassment.

Offices and the Media

The remaining two sites in which students experienced, or witnessed, negative racial encounters were government offices and the media. In the former, the role relationship is that of citizen-bureaucrat; in the latter, the individual is a passive receiver of information.

The experience of a student of Chinese background with immigration officials can be used to illustrate the type of incident that can arise in citizen-bureaucrat encounters. In this case, the student was offended by a remark of the official that, "we say we didn't invite you to Canada." The student may have been doubly incensed by the remark because, to use his words, "even the officer's skin is Black saying that to me."

A student in the same group remarked that, "I have similar experience of being treated quite unfriendly by a Black receptionist, but," the student hastily added, "I'm not labelling her just because she is Black." The student felt that the real issue was education. "I have a feeling," the student continued, "the more educated and a higher the ranking an officer, the more civil he or she is, at least from the outside."

For some students the media are viewed as contributing to negative racial experiences. As pointed out by a male African student, "If the Black guy does something the way the media as posing toward a war." By way of contrast, "if a Chinese or a White guy does it, that is ok."

Conclusion

Before reaching conclusions it is important to reiterate that incidents analyzed in this report cannot be used as an indication of the frequency of students' negative racial encounters outside of the university. The information can be used to identify the sites in which negative encounters may occur and the role relationships and issues involved in such encounters. Large surveys would be needed to determine the frequency of the described negative incidents among the general population.

There is a possibility that because analysis has focused only on negative experiences, readers might be left with the impression that students' lives are dominated by issues of race and origin. This would be a mistaken conclusion. Clearly, the focus group materials indicate that at one point or another many students may have experienced, or witnessed, negative racial incidents. In addition, Black and Chinese origin students may be more affected by racial issues than Whites. There was, however, little to indicate that in general students interpreted the main events in their lives in terms of race or origin. Having made these caveats, there are a number of conclusions that derive from the analysis of focus group materials.

First, an initial analysis of focus group materials resulted in the identification of a number of unanticipated sites of negative racial encounters such as stores and buses. In addition, places of work and the police were raised less frequently than anticipated in the context of negative racial encounters. As a result, I was required to examine the source of my unarticulated original expectations. In so doing, I concluded that my expectations paralleled the emphasis given by the *Globe and Mail* - and likely other media - in articles involving visible minority groups. In addition, the sites most frequently dealt with by the *Globe and Mail* may not correspond to the sites in which individuals most frequently experience such encounters.

Second, as suggested in the introduction, neither the 'totalitarian' nor the 'utopian' perspective on racism assists in the organization of materials collected in the focus groups. In essence, from the information collected in the focus groups, it is not possible to argue that racism is all pervasive and that non-Whites who have not experienced racism are fooling themselves. Nor can it be argued that racism does not exist and that individuals who claim to have been victims of racism are wrong. Instead, the 'situational' approach appears to be of more relevance. Racism may affect certain, but not all, encounters. Some, but not all, members of various groups may also not encounter racism.

Third, negative racial encounters occur in a number of sites. While I expected in this regard that students would make reference to places of work and, to a lesser extent, schools, I was unprepared for the fact that 38% of all discussion would focus on events in stores and on buses/trains. In addition, I had expected that far more discussion than actually occurred would focus on the police.

The analysis also indicates that differential treatment based on race may vary from site to site. For example, Black, but not Chinese, youth complain of racial encounters in stores. Some Chinese students are viewed as receiving favourable treatment in schools (result of positive stereotyping). Indeed, some (not all) Chinese students themselves believe that they benefited from special treatment from teachers.

Fourth, individuals of Chinese, Black, and Italian and Portuguese origin have all been involved in negative racial encounters outside of the university. Moreover, examples can be given of incidents in which members of each group were victims of, and contributors to, negative racial encounters. In essence, to argue that Whites cannot be victims of racism because they enjoy the privilege of power is untenable. Not only are the vast majority of Whites just as excluded as non-Whites from many decisions that affect their lives, but also, at the level of many daily encounters in which race enters the negotiation of role relationships, it is clear that the advantage is not always with Whites (recall the example of the female Italian student at the track meet). Moreover, many of the negative racial encounters that were described by students did not involve Whites. Instead, they occurred between Blacks and individuals of Chinese origin.

Fifth, independent of race or origin, there is a feeling among students that in *general* outside of the university Blacks and students of Chinese origin are treated worse than Whites. In some *specific* situations, however, there is a belief that individuals of Chinese origin may receive favourable treatment. This possibility was raised, for example, in the context of positive expectations of Chinese students in the schools. Within schools it was clear that students resented negative expectations based on race or origin.

Sixth, some students talk about their negative encounters, particularly in stores and jobs, in a way that suggests an organization of experience in terms of 'systemic racism'. In other situations negative encounters tend to be associated with individual characteristics and idiosyncracies.

Overall, these conclusions, and the analysis that preceded them, confirm that the issues of race, racism, discrimination, and systemic racism are complex. Ideological responses that do not recognize this complexity retard rather than advance the cause of social justice.

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